

**Draft Summary of the Engineering and Operations Work Group Meeting
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)
August 29, 2003**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted the Engineering and Operations Work Group (EOWG) meeting on August 29, 2003 at the Oroville Field Division in Oroville.

A summary of the discussions, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present an informational summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following attachments are provided with this summary:

- Attachment 1 Meeting Agenda
- Attachment 2 Meeting Attendees
- Attachment 3 Flood Management Study Presentation
- Attachment 4 Watershed Protection PM&E Option Identification Form, Butte County
- Attachment 5 Outline for Disseminating Modeling Results to Work Groups, Plenary, and Stakeholders
- Attachment 6 Summary of Potential Model Runs, August 20, 2003

Introduction

Attendees were welcomed to the EOWG meeting. The meeting agenda and desired outcomes were reviewed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees and their affiliations are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively.

August 1, 2003 Meeting Summary and Action Items

A summary of the August 1, 2003 EOWG is posted on the relicensing web site. The EOWG reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

Action Item EO#81: Coordinate with Environmental Work Group to clarify modeling scenarios 12 and 16 and obtain additional information from Fisheries Task Force regarding questions to be answered by modeling effort.

Status: Curtis Creel, Operations Resource Area Manager (RAM) reported that this action is in progress and he is working with the Environmental RAM, Terry Mills, to clarify questions to be answered by modeling scenarios 12 and 16.

Carry Over Action Items

Action Item EO#75: Look at the existing studies regarding flood control completed by the Corps of Engineers (Comprehensive Plan) to determine what needs to be modeled for the relicensing process.

Status: Curtis clarified that this action item refers to an effort to investigate additional flood storage space in Lake Oroville by routing flood flow through the reservoir. This issue was discussed later in the meeting under agenda item III. (See summary below).

Action Item EO#76: Further develop potential model scenarios and distribute a revised draft to the EOWG for review and comment. Summarize the information in spreadsheet format.

Status: This is an on-going effort.

Action Item EO#78: Develop an agenda for multi-day, cross resource model results workshop and distribute a draft to the EOWG for review and comment.

Status: The next modeling workshop agenda was discussed later in the meeting under agenda item IV. (See summary below)

Action Item EO#80: Develop draft Engineering and Operations Matrix similar to Environmental Work Group matrix.

Status: Curtis reported that this action is in progress and a draft will be available at the next EOWG meeting.

Update on Flood Management Study

Curtis Creel began the discussion by noting that the model scenario dealing with flood reservation is a placeholder since no proposed resource actions have been submitted. He explained the intention is to prioritize the model runs to provide the maximum information relative to proposed resource actions as possible. Bill Lewis representing Yuba City asked if the Resource Action Information Form was posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator responded that it is posted but will send an electronic copy directly to Bill. Bill also expressed concern that the web site was not updated in a timely manner, and the Facilitator will relay that concern to the web site manager.

Ted Alvarez with DWR presented an update on SP-E4: Flood Management Study (Attachment 3 to this summary). He reviewed stakeholder concerns that lead to the development of SP-E4, and reminded the EOWG of the general approach and methodology developed for the study. His presentation included a status report for each of the Study Plan tasks (refer to Attachment 3 for details). The EOWG discussed the update and Curtis noted that the 1997 flood event did not exhibit the expected peak but rather held steady at a high flow level suggesting some limitation in conveyance. Ted noted that the determination of probable maximum flood (PMF) has been delayed due to funding issues but should be completed early next year. Ted indicated a draft report on SP-E4 should be available next month unless inclusion of the PMF analysis is required, in which case the report would be delayed until early 2004. The EOWG agreed they would rather get the report in September without the PMF information and asked that Rashid Ahmed, Engineering RAM for DWR confirm the status of PMF determination and report back to the EOWG.

Curtis Creel described the global approach DWR would prefer to take when discussing flood management issues and explained DWR's work with Yuba County and the Corps of Engineers to update flood curves for the Yuba and Feather rivers and install additional gaging stations in both watersheds to increase monitoring and coordination.

Bill Lewis asked if DWR would re-evaluate how quickly flows could be increased during flood events. Curtis indicated that information would be needed to evaluate how quickly is safe with respect to levee integrity. Ken Kules representing Metropolitan Water District suggested flood issues should be part of a cumulative impact analysis to evaluate how the Oroville Facilities relate to all other projects and noted the difficulty in sorting out what the Oroville Facilities' contribution is to downstream flood effects. Curtis reiterated that DWR does not anticipate conducting a regional flood analysis within relicensing because other forums are more appropriate for that effort. Bill Lewis expressed concern that the study was not following the tasks as described in SP-E4, which calls for an evaluation of measures that could be undertaken to increase downstream protection. Curtis will review the Study Plan tasks with Rashid Ahmad to confirm the study is following the methodology described in the Study Plan. Ken Kules noted that since baseline is the existing condition, with no changes to operations proposed there is no need to study changes unless enhancements are proposed. Ted Alvarez agreed to distribute his presentation electronically to the EOWG.

Butte County Watershed Protection Proposed Resource Action

Ed Craddock representing Butte County distributed copies of a Proposed Resource Action for Watershed Protection from the County (Attachment 4). He explained that the primary County interest is in the preservation of water quality and increasing water quantity within the Feather River watershed. He added that the County has hired a consultant to evaluate various watershed models. Curtis reviewed the methods by which proposed resource actions are brought into the collaborative process.

De-brief on Modeling Workshop

Curtis Creel provided a brief update on the last modeling workshop and presented an outline for the next modeling workshop with a focus on disseminating modeling results to the collaborative (Attachment 5). The EOWG discussed the possibility that the models developed as a part of the relicensing process would be available post-licensing for use by DWR and others. Curtis noted that the tools may change with time but would remain valuable for use by the Department and others and suggested the topic be discussed at the next modeling workshop.

The EOWG discussed dissemination of information in advance of the next workshop and the general organization of the workshop around specific resource issues such as water supply, temperatures, water levels and flows. The EOWG discussed the benefits of designing 'break out' sessions at the workshop to allow focused discussion on specific resource issues. DWR and the consulting team will discuss the use of small groups and other options and detail an approach in the annotated outline for the EOWG to review.

Revised Modeling Scenarios

The EOWG reviewed the most recent summary of potential model runs (Attachment 6) to determine preliminary priority for the runs. Curtis suggested that Scenario 17, designed to investigate the extent of temperature control from Oroville Facilities, is a priority to run first. This scenario represents Study Plan E6 and can be accomplished now independent of the benchmark scenario runs. Curtis added that Scenario 13, which will evaluate water supply impacts on Lake Oroville Water Levels, and scenarios 1 and 2, which evaluate pump-back and peaking operations are also high priority. The EOWG agreed that those scenarios are appropriate priorities to begin with. The EOWG discussed the potential use of different tools but concluded that there is comfort in the suite of tools currently developed. The EOWG might want to consider using other tools later in the process during alternatives analysis and recognized that a key consideration for all model use is the ability to cross check with reality.

Curtis noted that the potential model run list will likely grow and requests may come to provide information for specific proposed resource actions. He expressed hope that the current list of scenarios would answer some of those specific information needs. The EOWG discussed the use of poster sessions to convey important information and suggested that for example, the flow-stage curves for calibration points could be graphically displayed on a poster. Curtis reminded participants of the need to avoid using such data to predict specific depths at specific locations along the river. Curtis will update the summary of model runs to include new information and provide a new draft to the EOWG at its September 26, 2003 meeting.

Next Steps

The EOWG agreed to set the September EOWG meeting for the afternoon of September 26 in The Resources Building to accommodate individuals that are interested in participating in the continued discussion of SP-E4 and in planning to attend a scheduled Yuba/Feather meeting that morning.

The EOWG participants agreed to meet:

Date: September 26, 2003

Time: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Location: The Resources Building, Sacramento with video and teleconference capabilities to OFD

Action Items

The following action items were identified by the Engineering and Operations Work Group and includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and due date.

Action Item EO#82: Send electronic copy of Resource Action Information Form to Bill Lewis, Yuba City.

Responsible: Facilitator

Due Date: September 26, 2003

Action Item EO#83: Confirm status of PMF determination and report back to EOWG.

Responsible: DWR

Due Date: September 26, 2003

Action Item EO#84: Distribute Flood Management Presentation electronically to EOWG.

Responsible: DWR

Due Date: September 26, 2003

Action Item EO#85: Distribute electronically to EOWG for comment an annotated Modeling Workshop outline with detailed approach to the use of group breakouts, key issues, etc.

Responsible: DWR

Due Date: September 26, 2003

Action Item EO#86: Update the summary of model runs to include new information and provide a new draft to the EOWG.

Responsible: DWR

Due Date: September 26, 2003

Carry Over

Action Item EO#80: Develop draft Engineering and Operations Matrix similar to Environmental Work Group matrix.

Responsible: DWR/Consulting team

Due Date: September 26, 2003

Action Item EO#81: Coordinate with Environmental Work Group to clarify modeling scenarios 12 and 16 and obtain additional information from Fisheries Task Force regarding questions to be answered by modeling effort.

Responsible: DWR/Consulting team

Due Date: September 2003